

#### **REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: None of the prior art of record taught the specific z-folding operation followed by a second folding step wherein the elastic was trapped between the folded portions and disposed in the middle of a strip shaped sheet in order to form a standing gather forming member having a basal wall. The reference to Suzuki et al suggested the finished assembly but failed to teach a z-folding step. While z-folding was known in the art for forming a leg cuff component as suggested by Nakaoka et al or French Patent 2,711,057, neither employed a second folding operation whereby the other side portion of the strip shaped sheet covered the part of the middle portion remaining uncovered by the first side portion and also overlaying the z-folded portion of the first side portion. While the use of folding boards was well recognized, the use of the boards to fold in the specific manner claimed was not anticipated or rendered obvious by the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to /Jeff H. Aftergut/ whose telephone number is 571-272-1212. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:30-4:00 pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Crispino can be reached on 571-272-1226. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jeff H. Aftergut/  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1791

JHA  
June 8, 2008